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## HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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# THE WORK OF PATIENCE.

"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—JAMES i., 3, 4.

Language evidently took its rise at an early period of the development of the race; and of necessity words were derived from material things long before they were from the immaterial and invisible, and in greater abundance. As a mere matter of fact we know that the terms which characterize what now are regarded as the nobler experiences of mankind almost all of them had a physical signification, but have been made to accommodate themselves to a higher order of things. They have now a secondary meaning. Anyone who is familiar with the lexicon will see how wide the process of derivation is. He will see what a variety of meanings single words have, indicating how long a distance they have traveled from their primitive state and use. They have traveled long because their traveling is in some sense the unfolding of human nature itself. In consequence, one of the difficulties of interpreting Scripture has arisen—namely, that words are applied in various ways which have, or may be supposed to have, any of several meanings—sometimes even scores of meanings, or shades of meaning; and it is not always easy to select the precise meaning or shade of meaning that was intended in any particular place. At any rate, it gives opportunity for ignorance to be ingenious or blundering.

We have almost no terms, now, that philosophically and accurately designate mental states. We are obliged to use figures, pictures, metaphors, illustrations of various kinds; and these appeal to men's consciousness. That is, as they go

SUNDAY MORNING, Dec. 20, 1874. LESSON: Heb. xi. 32-40; xii. 1-9. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 218, 212, 423.

back to some sort of feeling men understand them; but we have, and can have, I suppose, very few words which are capable of expressing accurately the various shades of thought and feeling which belong to the development of man.

Patience, for example, is derived from a word which means literally *suffering*, and would in the lowest stage of existence be simply power of physical endurance; but as men enlarge and develop the word grows to mean the power of waiting and enduring—power of waiting as against time, and power of enduring as against trouble. And as you still rise and develop, as civilization takes the place of barbarism, and becomes, under Christian influence, finer and nobler, the realm of patience still further enlarges its meaning—grows; and we do not at all understand its scope when we speak of it simply as the power to wait, or the power to endure.

Thus you will find in the passage which I have selected from James,—"Let patience have her perfect work"—the intimation of a building power. "That ye may be perfect and entire." It is an education, then. It is not simply the primitive act of waiting. What is meant by it in this passage is something that educates, symmetrizes the soul of man, and brings his whole nature into conformity with some ideal standard. "Let patience have her perfect work." There may be a superficial patience. There may be a patience that is not fruitful of very much good. In order to attain the highest benefits which are to be derived from this quality it must have perfect work, how long time soever may be required for it. "That ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." One would suppose, by reading many of the passages of Scripture, that *patience* was only another word for *faith*. Here, however, *faith* and *patience* are separated. A true faith inspires patience. In other words, it reveals the future in some sense, and by the hope and conception of it furnishes motives to a man by which he is able to be patient and enduring.

What, then, is the work of patience? and what is the scope of that work? Or, what is the "perfect work" which is here spoken of? It is very plain to every one who has been reared in a family, and who has occasion to teach little chil-

dren physical acts, how inapt, at first, the child is for those things which afterward seem to be spontaneous to him. It is very plain to every such one how much continuous drill and discipline are necessary to make the child walk, to teach it to use its hands with any deftness, or to bring it to any considerable perfection in the use of its eye. Every such one knows how much there is in disciplining a child to music, or to grace of action, or to good manners. Every such one knows how much there is of resistance in that which is to be overcome, and how many impulses there are in the child which are seeking to break away from restraint. Children do not love to be retained an hour in the house for instruction. No child loves, for any sake, to sit for an hour in a chair. A child that is accustomed to free motion does not like to stand in a school and take postures, and drill himself in them. One part of his nature is more impulsive than another; and while you are attempting the education of any organ, muscle or sense, there is all around about it more or less of uproar, or indisposition to be still. For we are made as commonwealths, and are populous within; and everything cannot be active at the same time. While one part of our nature is going to school, the other parts are obliged to keep silence. While one part of our nature is being exercised, the other parts cannot have sway. There must be bred in men the principle of self-control; and *self-control* means carrying one part of our nature so as to govern another part; and that part which is governed is obliged to hold still; and the holding still is patience, if it is anything. Thus, if one prefers poetry to everything else, and it is best that he should study mathematics, there will be poetic yearnings. The scholar would prefer other books than those which his tasks require him to use; but he must overrule that tendency. There is no single faculty that you can select and undertake to guide in a scholar, through patient perseverance, in any direction, that there will not be thirty-five or more faculties impatient to rise and have their play-spell, or have their functions developed; and self-government or self-control seeks the holding of one part of our nature in abeyance for the sake of developing another part.

Now, the whole man develops gradually—first the physical; then the social; then, co-ordinately, the intellectual and the moral; and, last of all, the spiritual.

For a thousand reasons the lower order of faculties tends to be strongest, the most ungoverned and the most ungovernable; but as the affections and social instincts come into strength, and begin to exert their influence, we are obliged to overcome those tendencies which we have assiduously educated. How carefully do we teach a child to walk? And then, in church-time, how do we make it a fault if he *does* walk? We teach him that there are times and seasons for the use of his feet. We are glad to see little children reach out their hands after things; but just as quick as they have learned to reach out their hands, and to use them, we begin to teach them that they must not use them indiscriminately—that they must be used rightly. Then comes the regulative process by which they are to restrain the hand and the foot.

How we teach our children to use their tongue! and what a nuisance that tongue becomes to the family! We have to teach them not to use it, or to use it discriminatingly—that is, at proper times and seasons, under the ten thousand influences which come up in the process of education!

The primary tendency is to give power to a function, and the secondary tendency is to make it drill itself into conformity with co-ordinate functions. The whole process of education is such an alternate liberty of particular parts, with such an alternate restraint, that, little by little, every part has its chance, every part gets its culture and strength, and all the parts are co-ordinated.

Now, *patience* means, in its largest sense, that self-control in any faculty by which it awaits its turn, and accepts its limitation, in order that others may have justice, equity, culture, development.

Looked at in this large way, patience is the fundamental necessity of a complex being, since we cannot bring up all the parts of a man at once. No man can sound every faculty at the same time. There is not wind enough in the bellows to give tone to every pipe in a man. There is not power

enough in the body to bear the reaction which would occur if there were a plenary inspiration of nerve-force, by which every part of the whole man should be developed in strength. Therefore, as a matter of fact, all development is in continually changing relations. Now one thought and now another thought, now one feeling and now another feeling, comes into the ascendency. There is a perpetual play, a perpetual rise and subsidence, all through a man's nature, in the process of every-day life, and still more in that form of life which is expressly educatory.

Therefore, when we look at the nature of patience, we see this to be a command of transcendent importance. We see that it arises, not from an arbitrary, nor from any vague and mysterious providence. We see that it is an indispensable condition of the thorough education and development of a being so complex that one part must be developed at a time, and that all the parts must be made to harmonize with each other.

In the outside commonwealth every man has his own rights; but they are limited by the rights of others. No man has a right to power, to function, or to anything else in life, when it goes beyond his own sphere and trenches upon the corresponding right of another man. And that which is true externally of a citizen is also true internally of a faculty. No part of the mind has a right to have any such activity and development that it dwarfs, or overshadows or suppresses any other equally necessary part; and the inner meaning of *patience* is the holding still of some parts of a man's soul for the good of other parts. The scope of this is very obvious. We *build*, as the apostle in this passage indicates:

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," "knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

Here, then, is the real philosophy of patience—the quality, and the reason for it.

The means that exist naturally, by which patience is taught in the divine providence, are many; and considering what the nature and function of patience is, the means that are employed to secure it and the occasions on which it

is required throw light upon many mysterious passages of life.

The necessity of industry is one of the great or universal conditions of human existence. Men are not, by nature, anything except a bundle of tendencies or capacities. They are to open and develop themselves by exercise. The necessity of the human race is the protection of the body; the supply of food; the maintenance of warmth; the security of all requisite physical conditions. It is the necessity of taking care of man in his very lowest primary condition that impels the universal family to exertion. As industries are complex, as they are co-operative, as they relate to different parts of the mind at different times, as they run through long periods of time, and as men working together have their rivalries and common interests, and are obliged to consider and consult each other; so in the conduct of the lowest functions of life, the physical industries of men are obliged to hold themselves in check. Men are obliged to live by faith. The husbandman plants his seed, and then he must be patient. It is the child who digs up to-morrow the seed that he planted yesterday, to see whether it is growing or not. The experienced husbandman waits patiently through months for the harvest. In mechanical pursuits, since there cannot be instantaneity in complex operations, every single step implies waiting, and therefore patience. And since men work together co-operatively, one must wait upon another.

The element of disposition comes in here; and the wider the scope of industry, the more apparent is it that the occasions and necessities for patience multiply themselves.

Now, out of this grows self-government. We talk about means of grace as if they were all in the Bible, or in the hymn-book, or in the church; but before there was a Bible, and as one of the steps toward the making of it; before there was a lyric, and as one of the points of education by which lyrics might become possible, there were physical industries which drilled men in the use of themselves; which educated the different parts of their nature; which taught them frugality, foresight, patience—and patience is self-control, under such circumstances. Here is a great primary

education which lays the foundations of morality; and on the foundations of morality piety is built—for reverence without ethics is void and vain.

So the work which men are obliged to do for their livelihood is a comprehensive means of grace, and an education to such an extent that we cannot conceive of a race being developed except through primary industries. If there be anywhere, among uncivilized tribes and nations, a preaching of the Gospel which leads only to prayer, and to various emotional experiences, you may be sure that it is not a perfect preaching—that it is a very imperfect one; for a true waking up of men, a true inspiration of the Spirit of God in them, always and everywhere develops industries, frugalities, sagacities, or elements which, although when compared to final results they may be inferior, yet as compared to the work which needs to be done among men, are indispensably necessary, and are sacred.

The avocations, therefore, by which we obtain a livelihood are real means of grace, as well as methods of instruction—and none the less so because they are comprehensive, because they do not break out into sects, and because they have not arrogated to themselves so much as the higher forms of religion have.

Then, in this great, and in many respects strange, economy of life, men are not free from suffering. I mean especially *physical* suffering. We often inherit bodies that entail a necessity of suffering. We deal in the world with elements which oftentimes inflict suffering upon us. Sickness, bruises, wounds, the various assaults that are made upon human life—these bring men to pain; and *physical* pain, in all its ten thousand forms, becomes an element of patience. It is the soul teaching itself to endure under conditions of suffering. It is a new manhood rising up, and it is generally the earliest manhood, which involves in it the primary condition of heroism. Ordinarily, men do not first learn to die for a principle or for their country. The primary element of heroism is gigantic strength. It is the ability to suffer with unwrinkled face, without emotion and without tears. It is the power to endure pain. This starts

the idea of the upward development of the race toward heroism. Afterwards it unfolds, and takes on larger forms and proportions, and becomes something nobler and more comprehensive.

As pain is universal, and will continue long, it is a matter of no inconsiderable importance to us to learn that there is a moral or spiritual result of enduring pain. There is a very great difference in the capacity of bearing. A little pain positively breaks down some men. Other men are competent to bear pain through long periods. A strange thing it is, that moderate pain may be almost a luxury. I have known persons who, for forty years, have suffered more or less inconvenience or pain from headache, in various forms, and who felt lost without it. It became a sort of stimulus to them. As the inhabitants of Boston drank their water out of brackish wells, when they went into the country and tasted pure spring water it seemed vapid to them, and they put a pinch of salt in the tumbler to give it a flavor; and pain, not excessive, but enough to keep the nervous system on edge, becomes almost a necessity to many persons.

Pain is a discipline of patience to those who are exercised thereby—or ought to be; and one who is brought, in the economy of God, into a situation in which he suffers, should ask himself, "What does this hirsute, rugged schoolmaster mean to teach me?" not, "What accident has brought this about?" A vulgar nature says merely, "What law have I broken? How shall I get rid of this pain?" A manly nature, not disdaining the question of how to get rid of it, says, "While it abides what can I make it do? It must grind for me; polish for me; build for me. This suffering is sent upon me; and the question is not alone, How I shall dodge it or get rid of it; the question is, What use can I put it to?"

In this way patience builds men under suffering. Some men are disintegrated by it. It triturates them. By it they become pulverulent. Some men on the other hand are by it not reduced to powder, but made into cement; and the cement becomes as hard as stone.

But still more we are obliged to go through the discipline

of patience by reason of our social liabilities. It is supposed that a man is in such a sense dependent upon himself for his enjoyment in life, that if he watches his own body and keeps it in a perfect state of health, and watches his own disposition and keeps that in perfect drill and play, he is all right. We hear from physiologists and teachers that human happiness is within a man's own reach if he will observe the laws which surround him. To a certain extent a man's happiness does depend upon the observance of those physical laws which surround him; but how is a man going to conduct himself in regard to social laws? You are to be happy; but you are to be happy as a sentient emotive being. You have a heart. It throws out its tendrils here and there. Can you guaranteee that the investment which you thus make shall not be invaded by bankruptcy? Can you guarantee that the love which you bestow shall bring you no pain? Can you guarantee that the imagination which you develop, and which depends for its food upon a thousand others beside yourself, shall always be a source of happiness to you? Can you guarantee that the various faculties of your mind, exercised in affiliation with your fellow men, they acting on you and you acting on them, shall never bring you into trouble and sorrow? Who can say, "I rise at the right hour, and eat the right food, and take the right sleep, and am temperate in all things, and have my happiness under my own control"? What if your cradle is turned bottom-side up? What if your companion, that is everything to you to-day, is gone to-morrow? What if the plague or bankruptcy comes, and all the elements of your social enjoyment, of your highest instincts, are swept away or changed? Men *are* dependent for their happiness upon physical things; and it *is* wise for them to obey physical laws and to carry their dispositions aright, so far as they themselves are concerned; their happiness largely depends upon their own self-control; but there are conditions around about every man which he cannot govern. There is a stream of tendencies from your forefathers which through you are exerted on your offspring, that are beyond your control. Men are surrounded on every side, in the family, in their industrial avocations, in their

ambitions, in their pursuits of every kind, by influences which affect their happiness. Men's lives are so interwoven with each other that one's happiness depends as much upon those that he is associated with as upon himself, or upon his physical conditions and obediences. You must take strokes. You must love and not be loved. You must be disappointed in your affections. You must be joined to households in which there is a variety of dispositions. Your faculties must come in contact with faculties of others which are not in accord with yours. Men in society are like an unchorded band of musicians. Each knows his own part; but it is not in harmony with the other parts. They may learn to play together; but while they are learning there are discords and clashings.

So each man depends for his enjoyment and development upon society about him. Nor can he ever get out of it. Here then, is another field in which patience or self-government is inspired and necessitated by the original and fundamental government of God.

In the proportion in which men under such circumstances are rendered patient, they have aspiration. It is impossible that this work should go on under such circumstances and have no larger horizon than that with which it began. Faith illumines wider and wider spaces; it leads to broader conceptions; and with broader conceptions there come up nobler ideals; and in following these nobler ideals men at once bring themselves into collision with another class of influences—namely, the manners and customs of their time; the limited institutions that have come down to them; the courses of pleasure and business that are open all around about them, and that are not conformable to the higher ethics toward which their mind aspires. As a man becomes more than a physically sound and virtuously social man, as he rises to higher manhood through the lower and intermediate states, he finds himself in conflict with his age, with the selfishness of business, with pride, with avarice and with the love of power, which are at once the creators of institutions and the managers of them. So that it is necessary for a man living under such conditions to have a superior, a

supreme, patience, or power of self-control and endurance. The necessity of self-suppression and self-control which begins with the very first breath of life never leaves us. It rises to a higher and higher sphere; and no man ever perfects himself in the lower sphere of patience until the door opens and he goes into another higher school and begins there. Patience is a universal and continuous concomitant of human existence in this mortal state. It is on this account that it is so much insisted upon in Scripture.

"Thou, O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

These qualities are the aristocracy of virtue; and patience stands as high as any of them—between meekness and love; and so we find it in every part of the Bible—especially in the New Testament. The attempt to live aright, which developed itself under the preaching of the Gospel, brought out the necessity for these things, and therefore they are much emphasized in Scripture.

"Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."

It is not a disappointing hope. We find, again, that in writing to the Colossians the apostle says:

"Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

Here the idea is unfolded and made radiant. Throughout the New Testament, and more and more as you come toward the end, in the grand drama of the Apocalypse, the patience of the saints; long continued endurance; standing to be pillars in God's temple—the importance of these things is emphasized in the divine thought.

If this general view be correct,—and I suppose none of you will differ from me so far,—there is a lesson in it for all men who act as if this world was created for nothing else except to make them happy. Some men seem to think that providence and nature ought to put them in a secure place, as it were, where they shall have water for their roots, and light and warmth to nourish them, and ought to remove them whenever there is danger; that their business is to stand and

bud and blossom and be handsome; and when things happen contrary to their wishes in these respects they are filled with amazement. They do not know what they have done that they should suffer. Do you know what you have done that you should not suffer?

When the axman has felled the oak, and with his broad-ax has hewn it, and fitted it for the mansion, suppose it should murmur, and say, "I do not know what I have done that I should be cut up in this way"? Yes, tree, if you are to be builded into a house, you must needs be patient and submit to be shaped. Brethren, if God is building you into his temple, you are to be squared and fitted; and in what way shall it be done? Not by your abstract volitions, but by the manipulation of the great conditions and laws of society, which unfold from within it perpetually.

Instead, then, of cares and burdens and troubles being so much waste matter, instead of their being so many misfortunes, they are the influences by which God means to develop every element of our being, and polish it, and make it meet for his kingdom.

There are men who, having failed right and left, go through life complaining of their misfortunes. There are men who even pursue sinister courses, and justify themselves on the general ground that the world owes them a living. The world owes nobody a living in any such sense. The world gives every man an opportunity for manliness; but if he has not the stamina or will by which to evolve that quality, the world owes him nothing. Rub him out! He is a cipher —a zero! What a waste-heap there would be if all the ciphers were thrown together without one figure of value to put before them!

This necessity of patience, as a universal and primary necessity of the human race, cannot be too strongly impressed upon the young, nor upon those that are rearing the young. We attempt to give our children a good education: do we give them an education in essential manliness? We lament that persons are in less favorable conditions. Who are these people that are in less favorable conditions? Take, for instance, those who rear their children in remote districts of

our own land. Take boys that work on the hard hills of New England. What becomes of them? They come into the city and take the places of the effete and effeminate boys that have had "opportunities." For, blinded by what would seem to be an almost unaccountable blindness, we dread to put our boys through the same path which we trod. We were *tanned;* but we do not like tanning for our boys. We were hammered out on an anvil; but we do not like to have our boys hammered out on an anvil. We say, "I have made a road through the wilderness that my children may walk easily." Their walking easily will make them weak; for strength comes by endurance. So by giving them excessive opportunity without much motive; by supplying everything that they need, and not obliging them to find anything for themselves; by sheltering them, and thus taking away their power of endurance, we bring them up as hothouse plants. And by and by when reverses overtake them, and the pressure of want comes upon them, and they are obliged to work for a living, they cannot endure it. The most pitiable persons on the earth are those who, being educated to all necessities, are turned out on the world to get a living at a middle or a late period of life.

This is nothing against wealth, or the opportunities of wealth; but the indispensable condition on which it is possible to make our children better by giving them, through affluence, opportunity for culture, is that they shall be taught patience, endurance, hardihood to bear. If they have not that, they lack the very marrow and backbone of character.

Parents have occasion, also, to practise for themselves this patience. Strange economy by which children are born as they are! Strange that they should be put into the hands that they are put into! Strange that they should be born of the young, immature, unknowing, in families where father and mother are learning their trade on their children, caring for them and educating them under circumstances in which so much depends on their care and education! That children should be brought into life through such conditions is a perpetual mystery. When parents attempt to mold their children and shape them, how much ignorance they display!

How many things they think to be great dangers which are not dangers at all! and how many dangers there are that they do not at all suspect! How children differ from each other! How hard it is to reconcile them in the family! How unlike, oftentimes, they are to their parents! How many children having silent-tongued parents are garrulous, getting the tendency from some ancestor! and how many children having garrulous parents are perfectly silent! How many impatient parents have patient children! and how many mild parents have obstinate children! On the other hand, how many times a parent has himself over again in his child—the hardest of all things to manage! He cannot manage himself, and he cannot manage his double. How many things of this kind there are in every household, which perplex, annoy, and cover the horizon with clouds of care and fear! In every household parents need to have a larger conception of the mission and the meaning of patience as a soul-building quality.

To all those who are in trouble; to all those who suffer from fear; to all those who find themselves hindered by their surroundings; to all those who are tempted to go wrong—to all such let me say, Ye have need of patience. You may be pushed, but it is not necessary that you should go over the precipice. It is not for those who are in the midst of difficulties to ask, "How shall I get out of them?" or, "How shall I change them?" This may not be a disallowable question; but the first thing to be asked is, "How shall I maintain selfness, firmness and patience, and refuse to be made worse by these exigencies, so that I may be made better?" There are thousands of men who think that the perplexities which come upon them in business are strange. They are near-sighted men. They look at proximate causes, not at remote tendencies. All business men carry a necessity of suffering. Therefore all business is a kind of overture to patience. No man who assumes the cares and uncertainties and risks of business should fail to gird himself with this Christian virtue.

There are men who are laboring in discouraging circumstances and places. There are many ministers who are

preaching where they have but little sympathy and almost no help, using seed abundantly and seeing no harvest spring up, not appreciated, often casting pearls before swine. What then? Even here is God's angel, though he is cloaked so that you do not see the radiance. Be patient. Work at foundations, so that by and by somebody else, if you do not, will carry up the superstructure.

There are those who are thrown out of life, and who are too old to begin again. There are those who are compassed about with infirmities which they have not the nerve nor the strength to endure; and they are breaking down. There are those whose life in old age seems to be wandering further and further from the garden of happiness, and nearer and nearer to the wilderness of sorrow. Nevertheless, go forward; because beyond the wilderness is the promised land. Nothing can befall a man in this world which he cannot bear if he is ready to die. In measuring your troubles always look at the worst that is possible, and ask yourself, "Can I endure that?" and make up your mind to it. If you can endure the worst, then everything that is better than that in your experience is so much clear gain. Gird your loins, and by every consideration of what is becoming to you, tested by the example of noble and heroic men of old; by every consideration of what is becoming to you as a child of God; by all inspirations of immortality, as well nigh within the sound of those who chant their victory in the heavenly land,—stand patiently; for the time cannot be far distant. "How long, O Lord, how long!" may be sounded out from the temple and from under the altar; but in that land where there is no temple and no altar there are none who cry, "How long!" All who are there have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and now they sing forever, and rejoice without pain or sickness or tears. Take heed to their example; for in multitudes they stand on the battlements of heaven crying to you in your distress: "Come! The Spirit and the Bride say, Come! There is rest here. Let him that heareth say, Come! Whosoever is athirst, let him come and drink of the water of life freely."

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice that thou hast made thyself known to us, our Father, not as one dwelling in supremacy of power and joy for thine own sake. We rejoice that thy royalty is that which thou dost send forth —thy wisdom, thy goodness, thy mercy—for all the creatures which thou hast reared up, and dost govern. Something more thou art than we can understand until we rise out of the flesh and into the spirit. Our perplexities are in ourselves. We rejoice to believe that the things which here seem to us most obscure shall yet be clearer than the day. We rejoice that our doubts and our fears shall be swept away in the day of vision when thou shalt manifest thyself as thou art, and when we shall be like thee, so that we can come into sympathy and understanding with thee. Then we shall discern thee, thy ways shall be interpreted, thy government shall seem transcendently glorious, and we shall join with all thy universe in ascribing praise, and honor, and glory, and power, and dominion unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever.

Grant that the hope of heaven may supply sight. Grant that by faith we may have that consolation which does come from knowing. May we wait patiently for the disclosure of God. May we wait, disclosing in ourselves that which is divine.

We pray that we may have more and more restfulness and trust in God, not by what we understand of his way and method, but by our confidence in him, in his truth, in his fidelity, in his wisdom, and in his bountiful goodness. Thy loving kindness is over all the works of thine hands; and since goodness rules we are content. All things shall work together for good to them that love thee. Grant that we may more and more rise to this love of God which is wisdom and happiness. Take away from us all pride and selfishness. Help us to, overrule those tendencies which strive for independence against the welfare of the commonwealth of the soul. Grant that we may be more and more docile to thine influence, and intelligent of thy methods, and that we may fulfill our duties here as the best way of attaining to knowledge of thee and of the great hereafter.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us individually; for all the kindnesses and all the ministrations of the household; for all knowledge which has been poured in upon us by thy Holy Spirit. We pray that all our privileges may be sanctified to us, so that they may redound to our benefit, and to thine honor and glory.

Draw near, we beseech of thee, this morning, to every one that is in thy presence. Minister to each according to his necessity. Do thou interpret what is best, so that we may have that willingness, and that perfect trust in thee, by which we shall be able to say, in all exigencies, and under every circumstance, The will of the Lord be done. May thy Divine will seem sweeter to us than anything else. May we have no difficulty, under the discipline of thy providence, in yielding ourselves to it, and waiting patiently for the Lord.

We pray that thou wilt comfort any who sit in the midst of bereavements; any from whom thou hast taken dearly beloved ones;

and if they are untaught in sorrow, and learn with difficulty the first lesson thereof, grant that they still may have thy teaching; that they may come by the patience of affliction into all its benefits and virtues. If there be those troubles and sorrows which will not depart, then grant that thy grace may be sufficient for their bearing.

If there be those, this morning, who yearn for friends far away; if there be hearts that remember dearly beloved ones who are in perils upon the sea, or in the wilderness, who are wanderers in distant lands, or who live they know not where, nor even if they live at all— O thou loving Saviour, that wert upon the earth, and didst know its necessities, grant unto all such the communications of thy grace, and rest of heart.

Do any feel that life is too hard for them to bear? May they understand that the servant is not greater than the master. May they look unto their crowned Saviour, whose crowns were thorns, who deserved all good and had all ill; and may they be patient, waiting for the fulfillment of his providence and the interpretation of his dealings with them.

May the light of thy truth shine on any who are in darkness or in doubt. May men more and more seek to learn the truth of virtuous dispositions, of holy emotions, of the worship of God, of the services of their fellow-men; and so may they learn out of their own experience things that pertain to thy divine government.

Make thy blessing to rest upon all the assemblies that to-day gather in thy midst to worship. Let the light of thy countenance be as the rising sun to them. Unite thy people more and more together. May those divisions which have come upon thy church be healed. May there be trust and co-operation; may there be mutual loving; and may there be an avoidance of all those things which stir up jealousies and separations.

We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere throughout all the world. May wars and their occasions cease; may injustice, and oppression, and superstition, and ignorance pass away; let virtue and true piety thrive everywhere; and at last may the whole earth be redeemed to the knowledge of God, and to the service of Jesus Christ.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises ever more. *Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT unto us, our Father, a sense of our unfolding, and of our coming immortality, that we may feel that all cares, and all frets, and all pains and all sufferings are but so many cogent influences pressing us forward toward our own selves, and toward our highest being. May we never be weary in well doing. May we never consider that we are called to suffer too much. May the multitude of our sufferings seem to us as the wagons and provisions which were sent to Jacob to bring him in royal state to Egypt and to the king; and may we learn to count it all joy when we fall into divers trials and afflictions. May we rejoice in infirmities. May we bear about the crown of thorns in our thought. May we carry with us evermore the cross. May we bear about the suffering Saviour, now the Succorer. May we remember that thy thought is with us. That thy sympathies are poured down upon us, and that the experiences which we are going through in this world are not vague and vain, but are ordered on a higher pattern than we can understand. So may we be patient and enduring to the end, and finally be saved.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, *Amen.*

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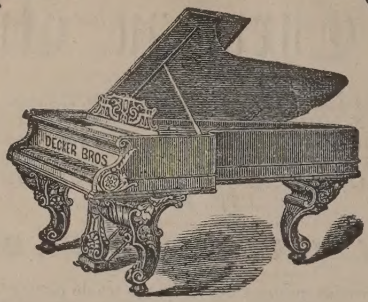


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